

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1 and 6 being independent.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and amended to correct minor informalities and improved their idiomatic English form.

Independent Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art. In addition, editorial changes have been made to the independent claims and selected dependent claims.

Claims 1, 4, 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Asano '562. In addition, Claims 2, 3 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Asano in view of Watkins '567, and Claims 5 and 9 are rejected as allegedly being obvious over Asano in view of Takeda '483. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 of Applicants' invention relates to a recycling method for an image display apparatus including a vacuum container structured by sealing a front panel and a rear panel with a supporting frame at a predetermined interval, with the front panel having an electrode and a phosphor that serve to display an image, and the rear panel having an electron emitter for emitting electrons. The method includes the steps of separating the rear panel from the vacuum container, recovering the electron emitter on the rear panel, and sealing the rear panel with the front panel to reconstruct the vacuum container. As amended, Claim 1 recites that the recovering step includes application of a voltage to the electron emitter.

Claim 6 relates to a manufacturing method for an image display apparatus including a vacuum container, with the method including the steps of separating the rear panel from the vacuum container of the image display apparatus that is recovered after use, recovering the electron emitter on the rear panel, and sealing again the rear panel with the front panel having the electrode and phosphor that serve to display an image to thereby reconstruct the vacuum container. As in Claim 1, Claim 6 has been amended to include the step of applying a voltage to the electron emitter in the recovering step. Support for the claim amendments can be found, for example, beginning on page 13, line 15 of the specification.

In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, a highly productive recycling method can be provided.

The primary citation to Asano relates to reutilizing a plasma display panel (PDP) comprised of a front plate with electrodes 5, a dielectric layer 6 and a protection layer 7, and a back plate having address electrodes 8, ribs 9 and phosphors 10. In recycling the PDP, the front plate is separated from the back plate, and the protection layer is removed by dry etching or sputter etching, for example, and replaced with MgO (see column 8, lines 14-22). In the back plate, the phosphor 10 is removed such as by the use of pressurized gas, brush-cleansing or ultrasonic cleansing in organic solvent, and replaced (see column 8, lines 32-38).

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, however, Asano is not read to teach or suggest, among other features, recovering an electron emitter from the panel, with the recovering step including application of a voltage to the electron emitter. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

The secondary citation to Watkins '567 relates to a method for aligning and sealing two plates in a field emission display and was cited for its teaching of providing an adhesive material that is a low melting point metal.

Takeda relates to a production of an electron source and was cited for its teaching of a carbon compound existing in an electron emitter.

Both secondary citations, however, fail to compensate for the deficiencies in Asano as discussed above with respect to independent Claims 1 and 6. Therefore, without conceding the propriety of combining the art in the manner proposed in the Office Action, such combinations still fail to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 are respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claims 1 and 6 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 2-5 and 7-9 set forth additional features of Applicants' invention. For example, Claims 4, 5, 8 and 9 have been amended to recite that the application of voltage is performed while the electron emitter is placed within a sealed atmosphere, with Claims 5 and 9 further reciting that the sealed atmosphere contains carbon. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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